2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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gáng. Thus there is nothing completely strange in the phonetic structure/94
of the language.

The problem of grammar is more difficult. There are two fundamental/93
categories in Kaingáng, the static and the dynamic, and these are expressed by different particles and by changes in the verb. The category of number—singularity and plurality—is also expressed principally in the verb. Present and past time are expressed by identical verbal forms, but the ideas of futurity, contingency and continuity are conveyed by elements that directly follow the verb which is in the active form. There is no subjunctive, but all ideas that would be subjunctive in English are expressed by syntactic forms, i.e. by placing statements in intelligible juxtaposition. There is no sex gender, and there are no concepts of definiteness or indefiniteness. Thus, on the whole, what one has to do in Kaingáng is to satisfy oneself with a much reduced mechanism. As far as morphology is concerned Kaingáng is actually easier to learn than French and German. When one considers the whole battery of case forms in German and the elaborate devices for expressing time—the specific forms and their proper sequence in complex sentences—Kaingáng actually is simple. The categories of the static and dynamic are not foreign to the Indo-European languages, which generally express them in the verb.[6]

The sentence structure of Kaingáng is, on the whole, subject+object+modifier+verb. Subject and object are followed by one of those troublesome formal elements that are so hard to define, and the verb is always followed by the sign of the static or dynamic or by one of the modal particles (time, static or dynamic, continuative). These elements are always the same, and one learns to put them in automatically. Thus, the major change in syntactic form from English is in the position of the verb. But for the student familiar with German the shift of the verb's position should present no difficulties. The picture of sentence structure that I have given here is rather elementary, and there are, of course, a number of modifications; nevertheless, this is the form the beginner learns, and it is not difficult to master.

The only really difficult problem in Kaingáng is one of memory, for one 000
has to memorize the entire content of the language. Yet by recording large numbers of texts one can increase one's knowledge at a great rate.

People frequently ask me how long it took me to learn to talk Kaingáng, as if one had a period of complete ignorance from which one suddenly burst like a butterfly, splendidly articulate. But learning is gradual. Day by day as he watches the people, the student acquires a word here, an idiom

[6] In learning Kaingáng one quickly begins to feel the conceptual similarity of their static forms with the verb *to be*, and of their dynamic forms and ours with the transitive verb.

3: Henry
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[For information on Caingang grammar, see category 116, pp. 178 (B) - 218 (B).]